

BRAZILIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE - 75 YEARS



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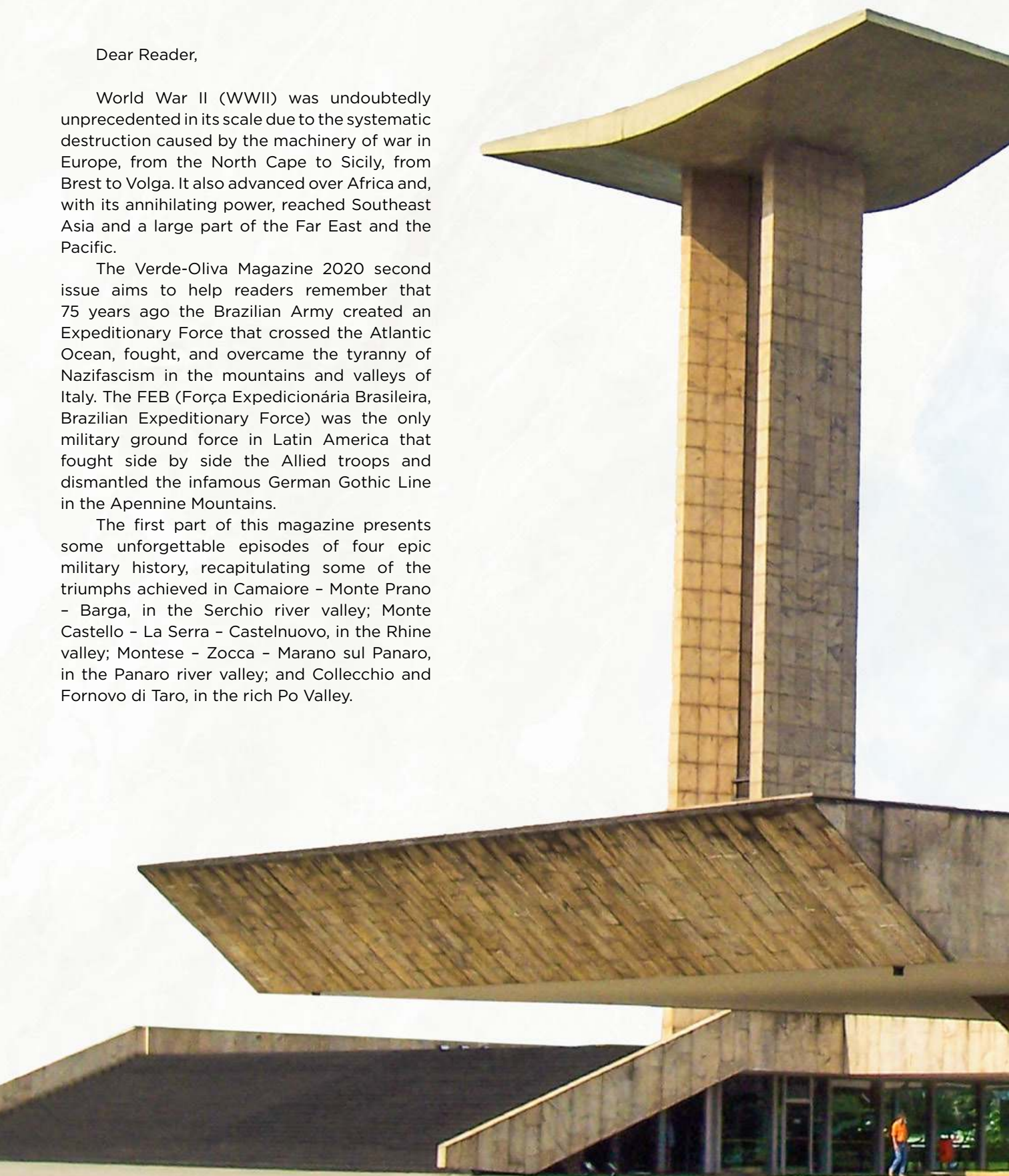
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Dear Reader,

World War II (WWII) was undoubtedly unprecedented in its scale due to the systematic destruction caused by the machinery of war in Europe, from the North Cape to Sicily, from Brest to Volga. It also advanced over Africa and, with its annihilating power, reached Southeast Asia and a large part of the Far East and the Pacific.

The Verde-Oliva Magazine 2020 second issue aims to help readers remember that 75 years ago the Brazilian Army created an Expeditionary Force that crossed the Atlantic Ocean, fought, and overcame the tyranny of Nazifascism in the mountains and valleys of Italy. The FEB (Força Expedicionária Brasileira, Brazilian Expeditionary Force) was the only military ground force in Latin America that fought side by side the Allied troops and dismantled the infamous German Gothic Line in the Apennine Mountains.

The first part of this magazine presents some unforgettable episodes of four epic military history, recapitulating some of the triumphs achieved in Camaiore - Monte Prato - Barga, in the Serchio river valley; Monte Castello - La Serra - Castelnuovo, in the Rhine valley; Montese - Zocca - Marano sul Panaro, in the Panaro river valley; and Collecchio and Fornovo di Taro, in the rich Po Valley.



On the second part, the reader will be inspired by a number of researchers' views on the historical trajectory of the Brazilian participation in WWII. In addition, efforts to publicize the Brazilian performance in that conflict are also addressed as, for example, the work of a young filmmaker interested in producing films about the extraordinary events that occurred with the FEB, in order to preserve national memory.

The last part of the magazine highlights some well-deserved tributes paid to those Brazilian citizens who were part of the unbeaten Brazilian Army during the eight months of combat, emphasizing the initiatives that for

decades have expressed our gratitude to *Pracinhas* (WWII Brazilian Army soldiers) for the sacrifice undertaken to restore freedom to the Italian people.

Verde-Oliva Magazine pays fair homage to the Brazilians who 75 years ago effectively fought for democracy, and invites you to share this issue with your family and friends, so that more and more people get to know about the history of those extraordinary Brazilian soldiers.

Have a great reading!



LTC RICHARD FERNANDEZ NUNES
Chief of Army Public Affairs Center



since 23 May 1973

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Mr. Luiz Fernando Vieira





BRAZILIAN ARMY

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Friendly Hand

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FEB - João Barone's records

Brazilian Army - Strong Arm

Episode - 1 - #26

Episode - 2 - #27

(Audio in Portuguese)



PODCAST

STRONG ARM

www.eb.mil.br/web/radio-verde-oliva/podcast



The image features a dark blue, semi-transparent overlay on an aerial photograph of a city. The overlay consists of several large, overlapping geometric shapes, including a prominent 'T' and 'A' that form part of a larger, faint background graphic. The word 'CONQUESTS' is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font across the center of the image. The city below shows a dense urban area with a river or canal winding through it.

CONQUESTS

BAPTISM OF FIRE

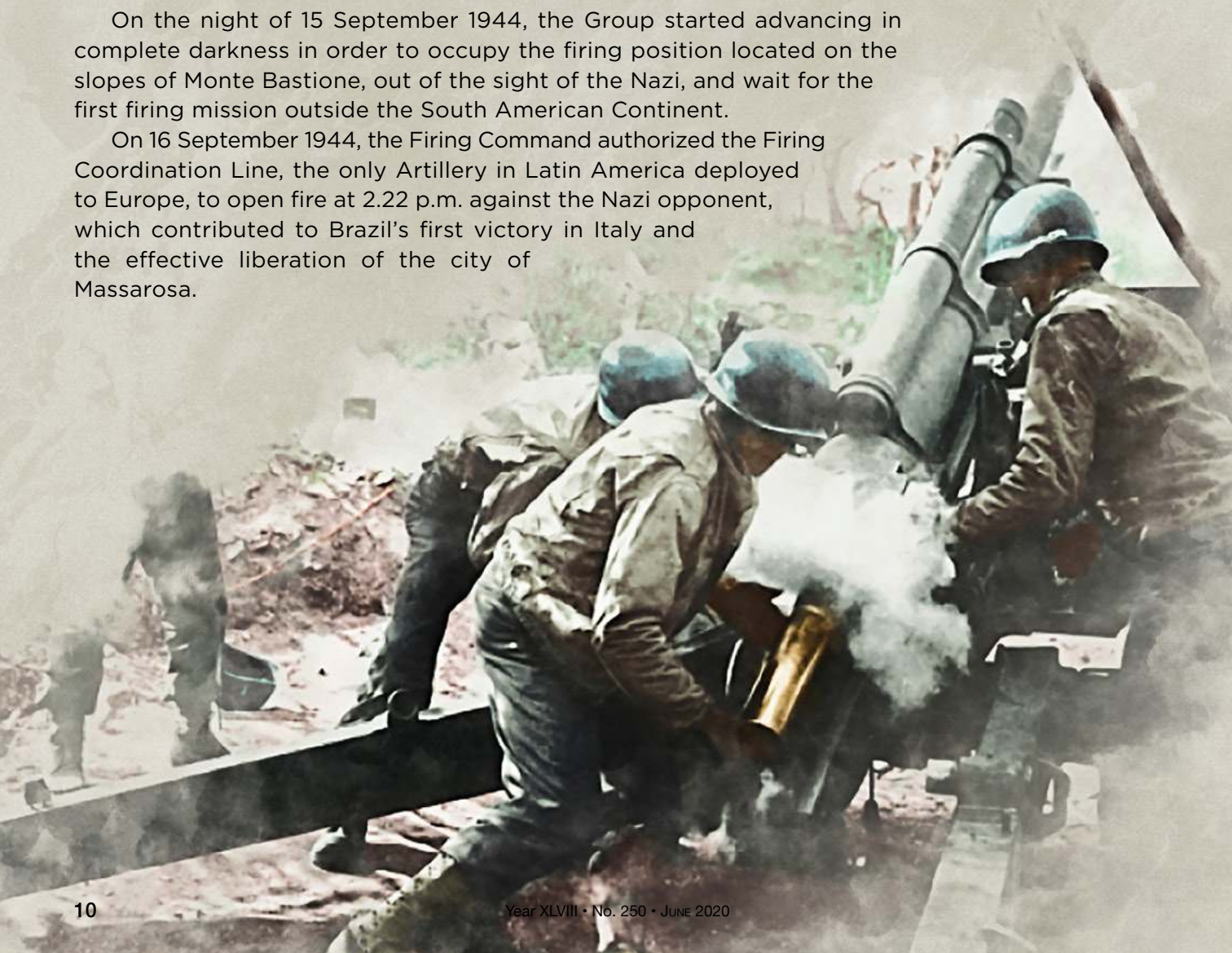
1st Round of Brazilian Field Artillery - 16 September 1944

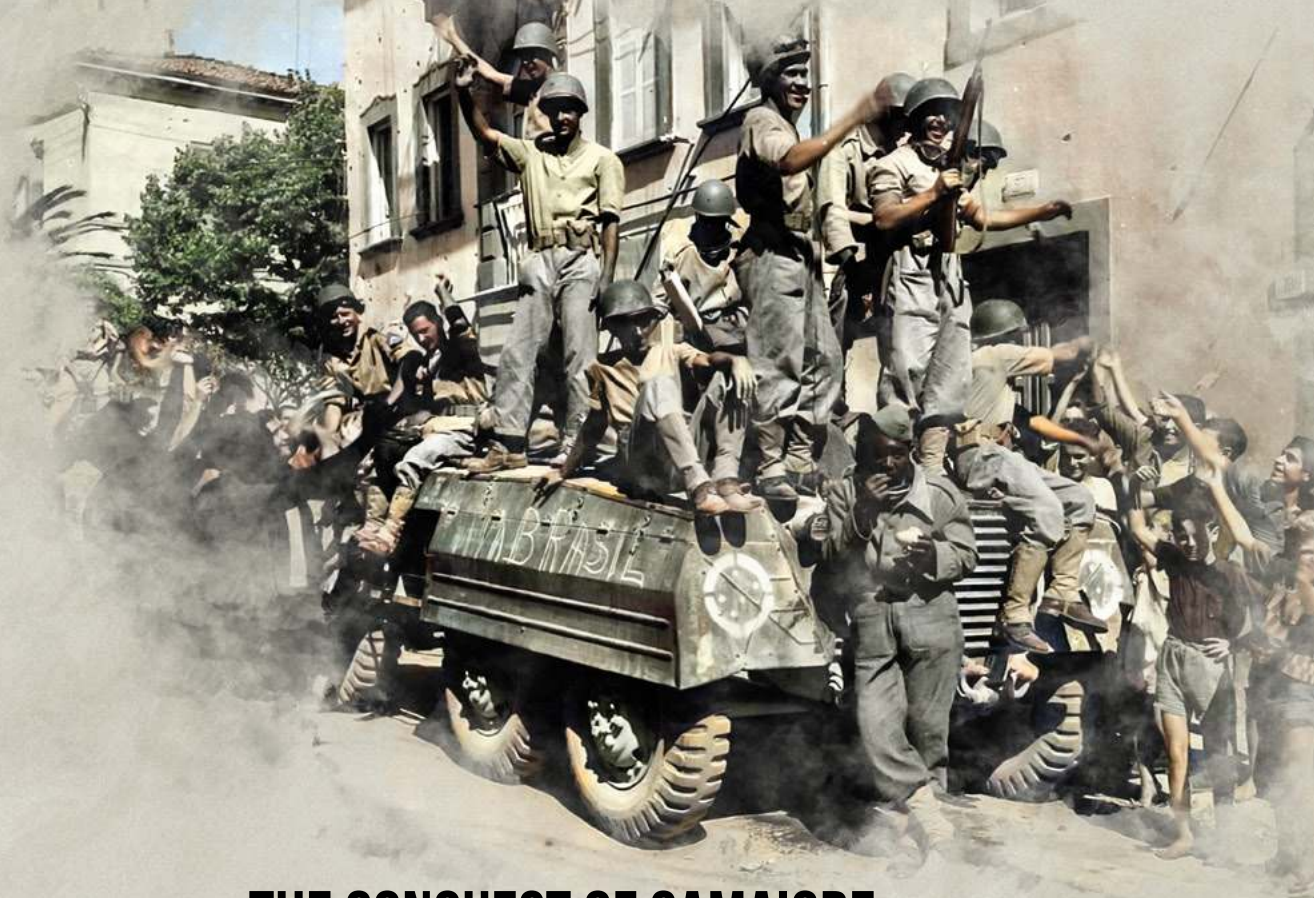
On 14 August 1944, the Advanced Echelon of the 1st Expeditionary Infantry Division was assigned to the U.S. Fifth Army in order to keep as many of the Nazi troops fixed along the Gothic Line. That unit of the Brazilian Expeditionary Force (Força Expedicionária Brasileira, or FEB) entered the front line, in Italy, under the command of General Euclides Zenóbio da Costa with an estimated strength of 5,075 military personnel.

Among those assigned combat troops were the 2nd Group of the 1st Howitzer Regiment (currently the 21st Field Artillery Group - Niterói/RJ), under the command of Colonel Geraldo da Camino, in direct support to the detachment that was composed of the 6th Infantry Regiment, a U.S. combat vehicle platoon and a Brazilian reconnaissance platoon, which received the mission to occupy and take the line Massarosa - Bozzano - Marti - La Certosa - Via del Pretino - Santo Stefano.

On the night of 15 September 1944, the Group started advancing in complete darkness in order to occupy the firing position located on the slopes of Monte Bastione, out of the sight of the Nazi, and wait for the first firing mission outside the South American Continent.

On 16 September 1944, the Firing Command authorized the Firing Coordination Line, the only Artillery in Latin America deployed to Europe, to open fire at 2.22 p.m. against the Nazi opponent, which contributed to Brazil's first victory in Italy and the effective liberation of the city of Massarosa.





THE CONQUEST OF CAMAIORE

18 September 1944

The Detachment of the Brazilian Expeditionary Force, under the command of General Zenóbio da Costa, conducted the first military operations in Italy after being assigned to the U.S. Fifth Army, on 14 August 1944. Nonetheless, the *Pracinhas* only really entered the front line on the night of 15 to 16 September 1944, when they replaced the North American troops that had been hit by a Nazi counterattack on the North of Pisa.

On that same day, the FEB managed to liberate the city of Massarosa from the German control. Our *Pracinhas* did not remain in that city for a long time but headed towards the city of Camaiore in order to provide cover to an exposed flank of the U.S. troops and to threaten the Nazi defensive positions. The rough terrain of the Italian Toscana, however, did not favor the deployment of a large number of troops. After carefully analyzing the situation, the commander of the Detachment assigned a special joint unit to take the next target.

On 18 September 1944, under a German artillery massive bombing, the first Battalion of the 6th Infantry Regiment (currently the 6th Light Infantry Battalion, in Caçapava/SP) took the Germans by surprise and occupied Camaiore. Although a destroyed bridge had ceased the movement of the U.S. armored vehicles platoon, our *Pracinhas* continued advancing on foot along the uneven ground of the battle camp, under heavy shell and mortar fire, reaching Camaiore.



THE CONQUEST OF MONTE PRANO

26 September 1944

Brazilian troops started advancing on 15 September 1944. Their first successful victories occurred with the taking and occupation of Massarosa on 16 September 1944 and of Camaione, under heavy artillery and mortar fire, on 18 September 1944.

On 20 September 1944, General Zenóbio issued Operations Order No. 6, which focused on ensuring procedures to take Monte Prano in order to weak the Nazi defensive lines. Along the further six days, from 21 to 26 September 1944, American howitzers and combat vehicles managed to reduce the enemy's defensive capability and provide cover, on the last two days, to the patrol platoon, under the command of LT Mário Cabral de Vasconcelos of the 2nd Company, 6th Infantry Regiment.

On the afternoon of 26 September 1944, the German troops abandoned their position and Monte Prano was taken by the Brazilians costing the FEB some casualties, 17 wounded and five killed. Those first actions lasted for more than ten days and helped the troops to progress 18 km towards the countryside of the area controlled by the Germans, who had been trying to break contact with the FEB Detachment.



THE CONQUEST OF FORNACI

6 October 1944

Art: Luiz Fernando Vieira

On the last two weeks of September 1944, the Detachment of the Brazilian Expeditionary Force had already gone through its baptism of fire, penetrated approximately 18 km beyond the territory occupied by the Nazi and made 31 prisoners.

However, that was the time to reorganize the position of the troops and to conduct the main action towards the Sercchio valley, heading to Castelnuovo di Garfagnana. Those operations started on October 2nd amid some fighting that were taking place on that mountainous area.

On 30 September 1944, the 2nd Battalion of the 6th Infantry Regiment, under the command of Major Abílio Pontes, resumed combat against the enemy near Capanne and Osteria; those actions were extended for two more days due to the heavy rains that made it difficult to advance. On 4 October 1944, the offensive was retaken and in two days the FEB Detachment managed to occupy Fornaci.

Taken by surprise by the Brazilians, the Germans withdrew without managing to destroy an ammunition and aircraft parts factory, returning, however, in the early morning of 7 October 1944 in order to carry out a probable attack. Fortunately, they were repelled by the 2nd Group of the 1st Towed Howitzers Regiment (currently the 21st Field Artillery Group, in Niterói/RJ).

At last, the taking of Fornaci allowed the FEB to take control of the cross-cutting road Fabbriche - Corelgia Antelminelli, and to ensure the continuity of the logistics support to our troops along that road.



THE CONQUEST OF MONTE CASTELLO

21 February 1945

The taking of Monte Castello was a decisive victory of the FEB, which took place after the winter defensive and the resume of operations by the IV Corps to which the Brazilian 1st Expeditionary Infantry Division was assigned.

The Operations Order assigned the 1st Infantry Regiment, codenamed Sampaio Regiment (currently the 1st Mechanized Infantry Battalion), the execution of the main mission and a Battalion of the 11th Infantry Regiment the defense of the flank. In order to ensure success in operations, our field artillery was reinforced by howitzer companies of the 11th Infantry Regiment and the 1st Infantry Regiment.

On 21 February 1945, at 5.30 a.m., the 1st Infantry Regiment was determined to start a fierce attack to take Monte Castello on that same day, with the support of effective artillery fires. After bravely attacking and showing exceptional resistance, at 5.20 p.m. the FEB defeated the



Nazi defenses, consolidating the targets and fixing a defensive position.

By conquering that slope, the FEB could provide a significant support to the taking of Torraccia, which was only consolidated after a tough battle fought on 24 February 1945 by the U.S. 10th Mountain Division.

The conquest of Monte Castello was the first of some successive victories that contributed to dignify Brazil and the performance of our Army. That achievement cost the FEB dearly since many Brazilians died in combat. However, that sacrifice was not in vain. A few months later, Italy would be liberated and the war over.

THE CONQUEST OF CASTELNUOVO

5 March 1945

On the early days of March of 1945, the 1st Expeditionary Infantry Division, under the command of the IV Corps, progressed offensively. The first task was to break the Nazi defenses in the Marano valley and, on a following phase, to take Castelnuovo.

The mission of the 1st Expeditionary Infantry Division was complex since to initiate an attack to Castelnuovo, it would be necessary an orchestration of procedures with the 10th Mountain Division, which had been combating on the left flank of the Brazilian troops since March 3rd.

At that time, the 1st Expeditionary Infantry Division role was to contribute to the effort of distracting the enemy in its area of responsibility. By March 1945, the 1st Infantry Battalion (I/11th Infantry) and the 2nd Infantry Battalion (2nd/11th Infantry), both of the 11th Infantry Regiment (currently the 11th Mountain Infantry Battalion), occupied their starting points where they had been hardly hit by the automatic machine guns positioned in Castelnuovo and by the German artillery bombing.

In response, the Division Artillery, commanded by General Cordeiro de Farias, conducted a heavy offensive against the enemies' observation points and reinforced the combat platoon that had been having losses without having initiated its progression to Castelnuovo.

Meanwhile, the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 6th Infantry Regiment began their first mission to take control of the German effective firing positions in Soprassasso, located Southeast of Castelnuovo. They had been given flank cover by the 1st/11th Infantry Regiment, which also supported the attack of the 2nd/11th Infantry Regiment to Castelnuovo.

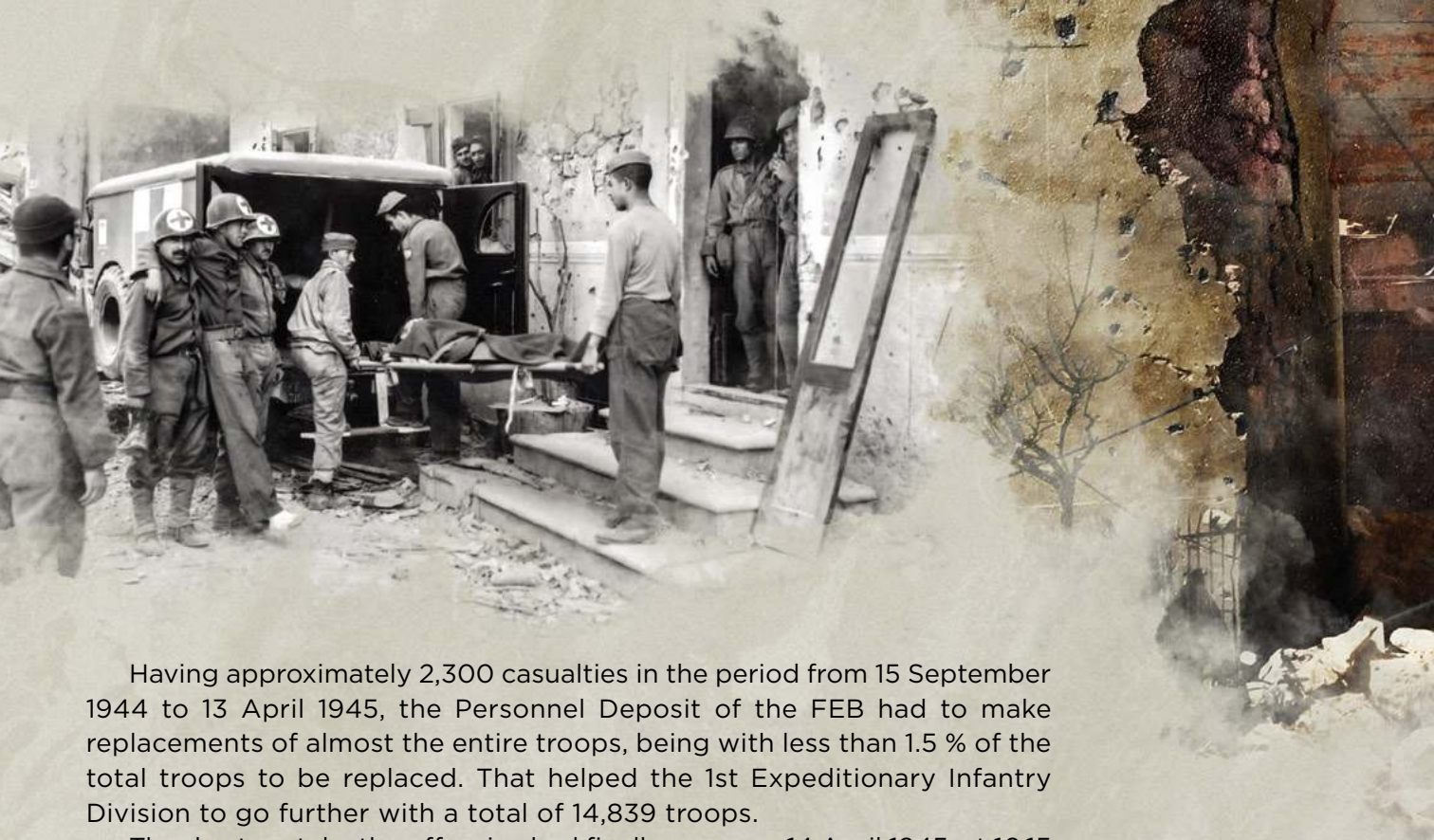


On March 1945, at 6 p.m., with a massive support of the artillery, the FEB took Castelnuovo while the 2nd Battalion of the 6th Infantry Regiment managed to take Soprassasso. The whole operation costed FEB almost 70 casualties, approximately 1/3 being killed and wounded in combat on March 1945.

THE CONQUEST OF MONTESE

14 April 1945

On 20 March 1945, the commander of the 1st Expeditionary Infantry Division, General Mascarenhas de Moraes, arrived at the U.S. IV Corps Headquarters in order to address the offensive plan that would culminate in the defeat of the German-Italian lines.



Having approximately 2,300 casualties in the period from 15 September 1944 to 13 April 1945, the Personnel Deposit of the FEB had to make replacements of almost the entire troops, being with less than 1.5 % of the total troops to be replaced. That helped the 1st Expeditionary Infantry Division to go further with a total of 14,839 troops.

The day to retake the offensive had finally come on 14 April 1945, at 10.15 a.m. Due to the fact that feelings were running high, the artillery under the command of General Cordeiro de Farias engaged in massive bombing over Montese - hill 888 - Montello, to cover the difficult progression of some troops of the 1st Infantry Regiment in the taking of Possessione, which took place at about 1 p.m. on that same day.

A few hours later, at 1.30 p.m., the 11th Infantry Regiment opened fire with an arrangement of support elements, including artillery and mortars. A massive blanking smoke provided the necessary cover and firing support to the attack so that at about 3 p.m., troops of the 11th Infantry Regiment managed to enter Montese village, disrupting the Nazi resistances in the area.



The FEB faced the stubborn Nazi defense, which was well organized and deeply rooted in Montese ground. After being repelled by the Brazilian fearless infantry, the Germans still fought like crazy along a four-day battle firing a tremendous bombardment against the already taken Brazilian positions, until they devastated the town into a pile of rubble.

From 14 to 18 Abril, the FEB managed to clear Montese street by street, under a dense artillery bombardment. It was a bloody combat which caused 426 casualties, a sacrifice that guaranteed tactical advantage to the Allies and weakened the Nazifacism defenses to a large extent.



THE GERMAN SURRENDER IN FORNOVO DI TARO

28 April 1945

The FEB bravely fought against all Nazi's attempts to retake Montese. Since the Germans were unsuccessful and disorganized, they started moving towards the North, setting up minefields and destroying roads and bridges in order to delay FEB's progression.

On 23 April 1945, the Artillery wheeled self-propelled howitzers, under the command of General Cordeiro de Farias, were used to transport the troops on foot, which provided the infantry with higher mobility to force the enemy to cease retreating and to organize itself to fight.

On 27 April 1945, the Nazi defensive positions were eliminated. Since they had been sieged in Collecchio, they tried to fight furiously and open a breach that would lead them to Bolonha; however, they were all imprisoned.

The FEB still had much work to do. On the afternoon of 27 April 1945, it positioned its troops in Forno di Taro so as to avoid the bulk of the Nazi division that was quickly progressing towards Po River to retreat, overtaking it.

The Germans were dedicated to sieging the *Pracinhas* and fiercely counterattacked along the whole day of 28 April 1945; Nonetheless, since they had been suffering continuing losses and been quite battered, they were forced to retreat positions whereas the FEB put much more pressure.

Some hours later, the FEB accomplished an incredible and unparalleled feat by carrying out its last military operations phase with the siege and imprisonment of the 148th German Infantry Division, of elements of the Italian Bersaglieri Division and of some remaining troops of the 90th Panzer Grenadier Division.

On 29 April 1945, the Germans were finally forced to surrender and the imprisonment of the 148th German Infantry Division resulted in the capture of approximately 14,779 prisoners of war, 1,500 motorized vehicles, 1,500 horse-drawn vehicles, 80 wagons, weapons, howitzers, cannons, ammunition and more than 4,000 horses. The general condition of the defeated troops was good. Almost all the chiefs and numerous young retired officers had the Afrika Korps decoration on the wrist, which was a badge of the Von Rommel's combatants. They undoubtedly belonged to an elite troop.

FEB's victory in Fornovo di Taro is a historic feat within the Brazilian military history. The strategic maneuver that forced the Nazifacists to an unconditional surrender was considered a milestone of the Brazilian participation in the Italian Campaign, which will be always remembered with much pride by the Brazilian Army.



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MEMORIES



THE ROLE OF BRAZIL IN WORLD WAR II (1939-1945)

Nylson Reis Boiteux

Retired Colonel of the Brazilian Army – Writer and collaborator of CCOMSEx on historical subjects

On May 8, 1945, the victory of freedom, democracy and justice took place at the end of World War II, one of the most painful events in the history of mankind.

In January 1942, in Washington, 25 nations signed “The United Nations Declaration”, which contained the participants’ commitment to sustain the war until the final capitulation of the “Axis”: Germany, Italy and Japan. Brazil, which initially had only declared its solidarity with the United States, broke diplomatic and commercial relations with totalitarian countries on January 28, 1942. Faithful to its traditional policy of friendship with the Americans and meeting international commitments, Brazil agreed to provide all the assistance deemed necessary, such as the transfer of air and sea bases in the North and Northeast of the country.

The reprisal was immediately felt. Numerous Brazilian merchant ships were sunk in Brazilian jurisdictional waters by German submarines. As a result, the state of “belligerence” was recognized in defense of our dignity, sovereignty and security, and also America’s. When Brazil’s participation in the war was resolved, it was also established that the contribution to be made would be the sending of an Expeditionary Force (FEB), whose constitution would, in due course, be agreed.

**Despite the countless lands that I
go through
May God not let me perish
Without going back there
Without taking this badge
This V that symbolizes
The victory to come**

(Expeditionary song, written by Guilherme de Almeida and Spartaco Rossi)



The Brazilian troops' trip to the European theater of operations had a special historical significance, as it was the first time that Brazilians fought outside our continent and took an effective part in a world war, alongside the Americans and other Allies, against a powerful enemy, whose bellicosity had subdued almost the whole Continental Europe. In addition, it is worth mentioning the unique participation of Latin American troops in the conflict; in fact, the Brazilian soldiers were actually the only ones who fought against Nazism in the entire Latin America.

The Brazilian soldier demonstrated all the endurance he has on the battlefields of Italy, and this statement is proved by the complimentary words American General Crittenger spoke. He was the Commander of the U.S. IV Corps in Italy, to which the FEB was directly subordinate. He said the following about the FEB after the campaign ended: "I am proud of having had the 1st FEB Infantry Division as part of the IV Corps in Italy. The FEB's achievements during the campaign will have a prominent place when the history of World War II is written".

For the heroes who have not returned and sleep the peaceful sleep of the brave, the recognition and deep admiration of those who love the virtues, repeating the sensitive verses by the immortal Camões:

**"Here will last from you forever
The fame, the glory, the name and the longing".**



THE IMPORTANT BRAZILIAN PARTICIPATION IN WORLD WAR II

Cesar Campiani Maximiano (PhD in History)

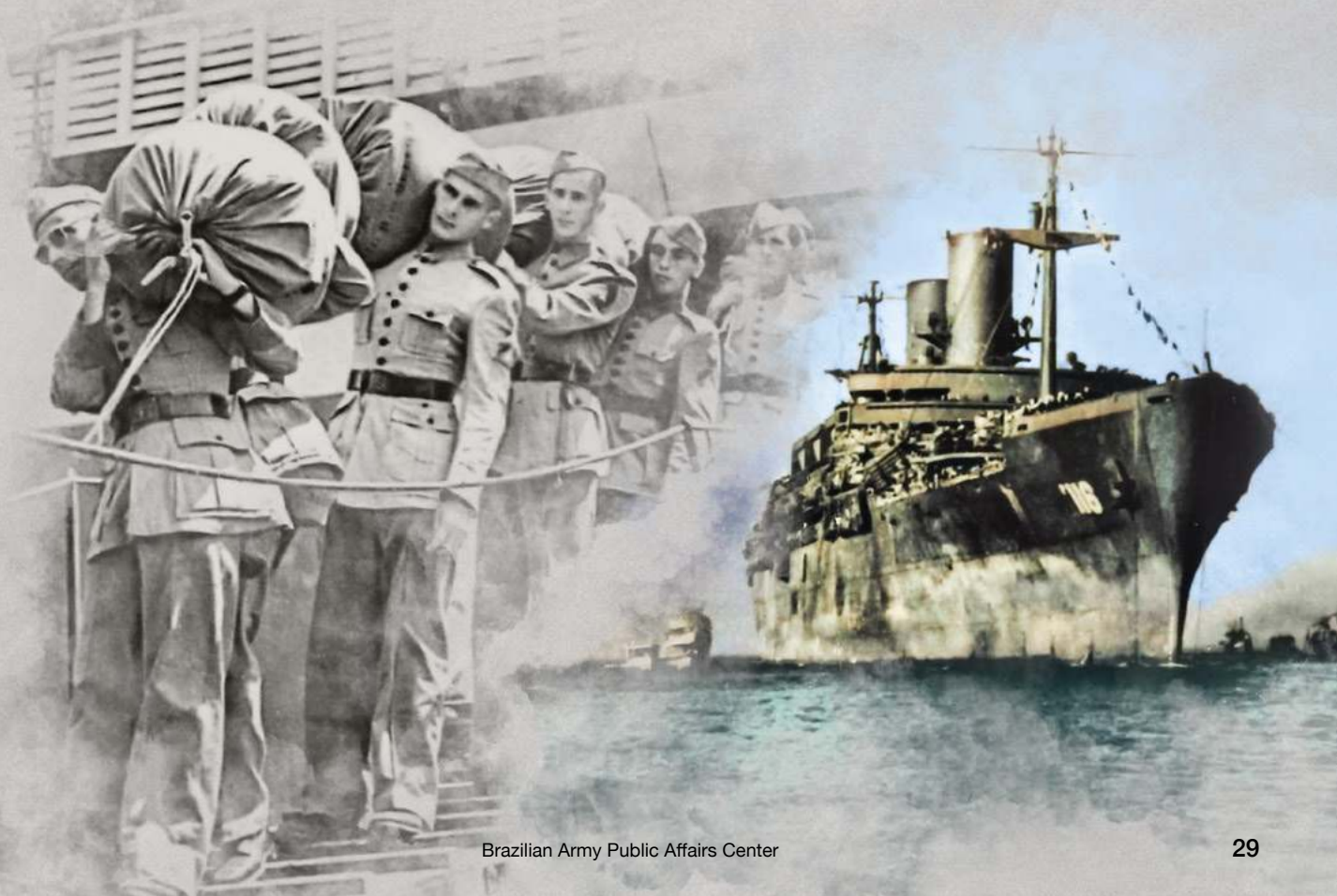
He was a teacher at the Meira Mattos Institute of the School of Command and General Staff of the Army and wrote the books “Dirty and Tired Bearded Men”, “Where are our heroes”, “Brothers in Arms” and “The Brazilian Expeditionary Force”

Having declared the state of belligerence at a time when the outcome of World War II was not clear at all, Brazil was sometimes considered a secondary and late ally. This judgment does not correspond to the contributions that the country brought to the victory in 1945.

The episodes of supplying essential raw materials and the negotiated transfer of aircraft bases used with the American Navy and Air Force are well-known and are important examples of the Brazilian involvement in the war, having results that had an impact in the strategic sphere. Industrial production depended greatly on ores and inputs available in Brazil, and the supply chain of the South Atlantic needed to be guaranteed with the logistical flow that allowed the supply of troops fighting in the Mediterranean Theater of Operations.

Such cooperation at the strategic and operational level also brought dividends to the country, such as international recognition, industrial development and the improvement of its military capabilities. All these actions had long-lasting consequences for the post-war period, and each one, in its own way, significantly changed the preexisting conditions, being decisive on their own merits.

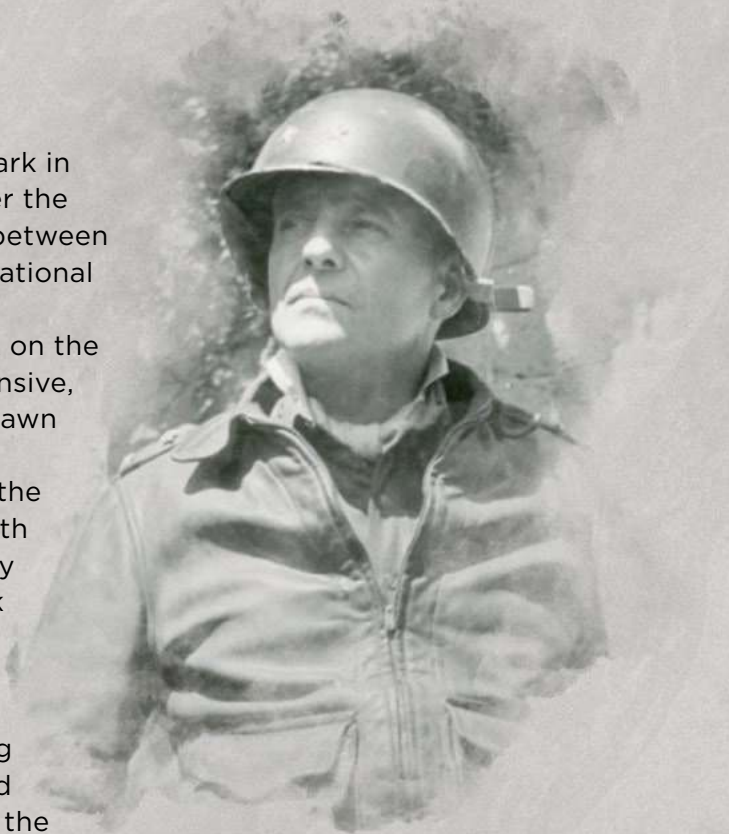
After sending troops to fight in Europe, the inclusion of the Brazilian contingent in the personnel of the U.S. Fifth Army brought the possibility of directly interfering in operations. The deployment of troops did not occur without a well-known phase of overcoming setbacks, errors and difficulties that were adequately addressed in the literature dedicated to the topic. Despite the original plan that aimed at sending an Army Corps composed of three infantry divisions and an armored one, the 1st Expeditionary Infantry Division (DIE, initials in Portuguese) was deployed, with the addition of elements of support and replenishment of combat casualties. Operating by excellence at the tactical level, the division, subordinate to the IV Corps and belonging to the U.S. Fifth Army, was deployed by General Mark Wayne Clark in the sector of the Rhine River Valley, where it fulfilled the role of putting pressure on the Gothic Line, so that the II Corps would be in a position to lead the advance towards Bologna and, consequently, in the Po Valley.



However, General Lucian Truscott replaced Clark in the Fifth Army command in December 1944. After the successful conquest of the last enemy bulwarks between February and April 1945 under Truscott, the operational idea that guided the actions of the IV Corps was changed, and that component of large units took on the primary mission of spearheading the Spring Offensive, with the primacy of the main attack being withdrawn from the II Army Corps.

Truscott's intention was to deviate from the strongest enemy positions, organized in the south of Bologna, maintaining light pressure on the city in order to disguise the main idea of the attack and to seize part of the German defensive power there. The effort would then take place west of Route 64, in the Rhine Valley, which was precisely the front sector where Brazilians had been fighting since November. After the great attack was launched on April 14, the II Corps would be transported to the area of Route 64, and the entire 5th Army would have to advance, side by side, from Modena, in a fan shape: part towards northwestern Italy and part establishing a junction with the Eighth Army (United Kingdom).

Thus, the main effort was the commitment of the 10th Mountain Division, which had the 1st Expeditionary Infantry Division (1st DIE, initials in Portuguese) on its left flank and the 1st Armored Division on the right flank. The April 14th attack, starting the Spring Offensive, had two regiments from the 10th Mountain Division advancing in parallel in the Castel D'Aiano area, with the 1st DIE and the 1st Armored covering their respective flanks. In the Brazilian sector, the third of the 10th Mountain regiments, the 85th Mountain Infantry Regiment, provided connection with the 1st DIE. On that day, 1,800 out of the 2,800 artillery shots registered in the whole IV Corps' action zone were aimed at the city of Montese only in the first twenty-four hours of combat.



General Lucian Truscott





The enemy showed high intolerance with pressure in the northwest direction and concentrated most of its artillery fire precisely against the Brazilian division, which, with the request by General Mascarenhas de Moraes to attack Montese, played a more active role in the offensive on the April 14th, in addition to supporting and replacing the 10th Mountain Division regiments. The German resistance intensified in that city, causing the 85th Mountain Infantry Regiment, after repeated attempts to advance, to be removed from the area and sent where its efforts could be better used.



General Mascarenhas de Moraes

The Brazilian attack, fierce and highly costly for our troops, led the Germans to understand that the rupture of the U.S. IV Corps towards the Po Valley would take place from Montese, allowing the tactical role of the 1st DIE to bring consequences that were used at the operational level, since the 10th Mountain Division played the spearhead role in the planning of the U.S. Fifth Army. Suffering very heavy casualties, but with the bulk of the enemy bombing aimed at the Brazilian troops, the 10th Mountain Division broke through the defenses of the Genghis Khan Line, finally making it possible for the IV and II Corps to advance to the Po Valley.





Even after the hard mission of conquering Montese, the Brazilian division continued to act in the last combats of the Campaign in Italy, carrying out a siege against a vast enemy contingent in Collecchio and Fornovo di Taro, having only one of its regiments and employing the others in the liberation of several other cities.

Appropriately employed according to the planning done by the Allies, the FEB carried out its tasks in order to collaborate decisively in the chain of the final operations of the war in Italy during the phase in which mountain combat gave way to a fluid movement campaign.



LT Virginia Maria de Niemeyer Portocarrero - FEB volunteer nurse.



VERDE-OLIVA INTERVIEW

Margarida Rocha Bernardes

Brazil actively participated in the World War II with the sending of the Brazilian Expeditionary Force (FEB) to the Theater of Operations in Europe. In all, about 25,000 soldiers were sent to Italy to combat Nazifascism. So far, known facts from our history, but what few know is that 67 women were part of this team of heroes: nurses who were ahead of their time, brave, they crossed the ocean to help the allied troops. The participation of these women in the World War II drew the attention of researcher Margarida Rocha Bernardes, postdoctoral fellow at the Federal University of the State of Rio de Janeiro (UNIRIO), biologist, nurse, specialist in Health Services and professor of the permanent staff at the War Superior School (Escola Superior de Guerra).



Q: Were the themes of your master's dissertation and your postdoctoral report related to the work of these FEB members?

A: In the master's dissertation, held at the State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ), I had as an object of study the struggle of nurses from the FEB for insertion in the World War II Operations Theater: 1942-1945. The initial milestone, in 1942, corresponds to the moment when Brazil, becoming one of the countries allied in the conflict, triggered the creation of a differentiated and special military force, the FEB, calling Brazilian volunteer nurses, with any nursing course, to be part of it, by American imposition. The final milestone of the research, 1945, corresponds to the FEB's return to Brazil. The emotion generated by this return was the input that drove the subsequent changes in the Brazilian panorama. When those nurses got into the Force, a woman with a different world view of Nursing, military life and also Brazilian social life was unquestionably born. In the post-doctorate, I directed my investigative look at the military attire / garment of Brazilian Army nurses in World War II. These were described, drawn and photographed in the nurse Virgínia de Niemeyer Portocarrero's war journal, which can be found in the collection of the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation.



Q: In your research, what was the thing that caught your attention the most?

A: The participation of our people in World War II was remarkable in Brazilian history. Even over more than 75 years of the world event, there are gaps and forgetfulness in the information about what happened, suffered, learned and taught our Brazilians in the impacting event of worldwide proportions. Based on documents, images and testimonies, it was gratifying and, still passionate, to bring data, light and voice to the Brazilians who lived that moment on the Italian front.



Colorized photography: Major
Elza Cansação Medeiros -
Volunteer nurse at the FEB

Q: What was the profile of the Brazilian women volunteers for World War II? What were the main difficulties of those women?

A: These nurses came from different Brazilian states and from the most diverse social strata, from daughters of great businessmen, military, politicians, judges and doctors, to simple girls from the countryside of Brazil. Sixty-seven nurses from the one hundred and thirty-six candidates went to the front, three of whom were professionals from the Anna Nery Nursing School: Altamira Pereira Valadares, Nair Paulo de Melo and Olga Mendes; a professional graduated from the Alfredo Pinto School: Ondina Miranda de Souza; 20 graduated from the Samaritan Course; 34 volunteer rescuers; two war nurses from the Brazilian Assistance Legion, two practical nurses, a midwife specialist in childcare and four nurses whose courses were not mentioned. The motivations for participating in the war ranged from individual patriotism, which involved them all, to the possibility of gainful employment, evidence of a break with the social model of women at that time. I looked at a troop that made room for Brazilian women of that decade to occupy the role of a health professional. The information received and the images of those moments recorded by Military Nursing, plus my habitus, sharpened the researcher's desire and interest to deepen and disseminate this knowledge, through historical research, with the use of photographic images of these military women. So, I found myself in front of the immense collection of photographs available at the Military Command of the East. That was my first contact with the iconography sources or photographic documents.



Q: In your opinion, what did the Brazilian female participation in World War II represent?

A: It was clear that, suddenly, due to the American imposition, Brazilian girls were selected and quickly prepared to face a war in a distant country, unknown to almost all of them, being forced to absorb, in addition to other cultures, new technologies to develop professional nursing work, working with North American teams highly prepared and organized for this type of confrontation, all in record time. Our nurses joined the FEB and acquired military habits in an inculcation process, obtained through exhaustive investment in the aspects inherent to theoretical, practical and physical preparation, which consisted of mandatory training. The families' diverse reactions, although divergent, converged to meet the patriotic appeal. The daily life at the theater of operations was also part of these adversities, in which I include: the adverse climate, the geographical changes of the hospitals, the nursing assistance developed together with the American multiprofessional team with an implanted routine, facing the language

**War only causes us pain
However, if the beloved homeland
Shall be outraged some day
We will fight without fear**

(The Brazilian Army Song, by Teófilo de Magalhães and LTC Alberto Augusto Martins)



Lúcia Osório - Official uniform from Army nurses, specially made for the participation of Nursing Group at FEB, during its participation in the World War II. Photo taken at the School of Physical Education do Army, Fortaleza de São João, Rio de Janeiro.

Location: 5th CML Section, Audiovisual subsection.

barrier to communication as well as air transport of the injured. In this transport, I highlight the absence of medical professionals, delegating responsibility to nurses for decision making.

This fact allows us to understand that the current situation of nurses in the Brazilian Army was based on habits and the struggle undertaken in the past. When these pioneers showed a willingness to adjust to the military universe, they opened up the possibility of a future entry of women into the Armed Forces. Despite all the obstacles encountered by the emotional testimonies I heard from the nurses and soldiers who served there, it was certain that these Brazilian citizens lived with the other allies in the World War II theater of operations. This trajectory ended up fundamentally changing the fate of the nursing profession and the political fate of our country. I want to leave this historical reflection, hoping that the nurses of the present will turn their eyes to the professional past, built with the help of this female group, and become a cohesive and respected group.



PRESERVATION OF NACIONAL MEMORY

Daniel Mata Roque - Filmmaker

Passion for the Brazilian Expeditionary Force leads young filmmaker to preserve national memory and promote citizenship through films

The Army's Historical Archive holds a rich documentary collection, which is the memory of the Land Force, giving valuable support to various projects related to the study of Military History, developed by citizens interested in the theme, such as the artist João Barone, professor Cesar Campiani Maximiano, in addition to master's and doctoral students. However, interest in the FEB has also been manifesting in young producers of cinema in Brazil.

Daniel was a passionate student about the history of Brazil. He did not know how, but since he was a child he had felt that his connection with this discipline would go far beyond school benches. In high school, he first heard the teacher talk about a group of Brazilians who crossed the Atlantic Ocean to fight for Brazil against Nazifascism. In 2012, the teacher's brief account of the troops going to Italy left the boy impressed. Without any connection with the military, Daniel Mata Roque wanted to know more. That exciting subject could not be exhausted in just three paragraphs. The bell rang, marking the end of another class period, and he went to the teacher with a peculiar interest in the Brazilian Expeditionary Force (FEB). The educator indicated the book "Winter War", by journalist Joel Silveira, to the student.



From that moment on, one of the greatest enthusiasts and guardians of Brazilian civic-military in World War II memory was born.

The 25-year-old young man from Rio de Janeiro is now graduated in cinema and maintains a production company, Pátria Filmes, committed to producing content focused on themes about the history of Brazil, with special emphasis on the participation of our troops in the World War II. "I chose to go to Film School because I think a film is the best way to tell a story and, with the modern facilities of the digital and the internet, the possibilities are almost endless. In 2017, I created MILITUM - Military History Film Festival, organized in partnership with the National Association of Veterans of the FEB (ANVFEB) and several other institutions in the area, which, by producing an informative and competitive exhibition window, aims to encourage independent production of the Brazilian cinema; promote access to innovative, cultural and educational audiovisual works; as well as providing the debate, discussion, learning and dissemination of knowledge about Brazilian military history", he explains.

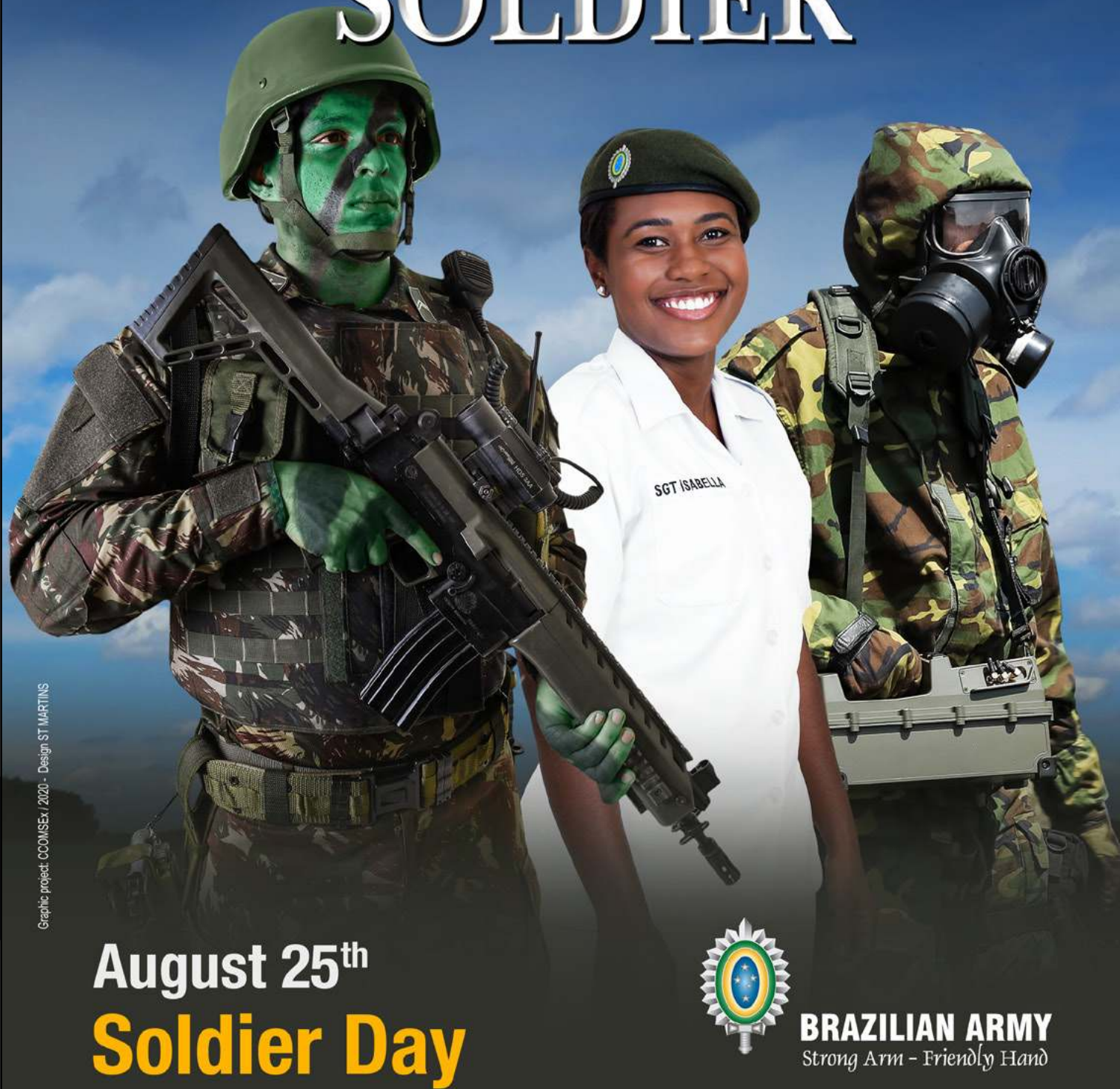
The young man is one of the few Brazilians who know the importance of the FEB for the outcome of World War II in depth. A history lover, an admirer of the heroes who, in the 40s, did not measure efforts to defend Brazil. He highlights: "It is a narrative of bravery, courage and solidarity. As the theme is little known outside the military circles, I can say that almost everything there impressed me, from the lack of initial preparation to face a modern war, going through the attacks on the Brazilian coast, to the significant victories in Italy. The history of dedication and selflessness of the nurses at the FEB was the one that marked me the most".

His passion led him to an exciting discovery: the work of research showed that his curiosity about Brazilian troops actually hid a parental connection. Daniel Mata is a distant cousin of a member of the FEB, nurse Helena Ramos. The discovery only increased the filmmaker's admiration for the theme: "I felt joy and, of course, pride. I was already on the ANVFEB Deliberative Council, I already had a closer relationship with all this history and with some veterans, but only then I started to include myself in the "FEB family". The production company, created by the young man, currently promotes the creation of civic films and makes all content, including books, free of charge, available on its website: www.patriaafilmes.com.



The filmmaker maintains an important collection on this part of our history and continues researching. Daniel Mata Roque holds a master's degree and develops a study on the national film "O Brasileiro João de Souza", launched in 1944 and first feature film about Brazil's participation in the war. We continue on the same theme: "The snake continues to smoke!", he adds.

Thank You SOLDIER



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TRIBUTE MEDAL TO THE BRAZILIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

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No. 162, of February 13, 2020.

Awarded to civilians, Brazilian and foreign citizens, members of the Armed Forces and Auxiliary Forces, military organizations and civil institutions, Brazilian and foreign companies that have contributed to the preservation and diffusion of the memory of Brazilian participation in World War II, or provided relevant services, or supported projects and activities of interest to the Brazilian Army, related to the FEB.

TRIBUTE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

WORLD WAR II AND... ITALIAN GRATITUDE

Giuseppe Nanni – Porreta Terme - Italy



Brazilians shared everything they owned with families in our region. I lived these stories, so I didn't read them in books or they were told to me. It is I, in the first person, to expose and say to you: thank you from the bottom of my heart. For everything they did for us. For us Italians and for us inhabitants of "Alto Reno". Thank you, Brazilian soldier!

Danilo Marchioni – Porreta Terme – Italy



What impressed me the most was the military pride of being here, of being Brazilians. In fact, I remember they said: "Brazil has the best soldier in the world", and this affected me so much that even I felt proud like them. Thank you very much, Brazilian soldier!

Valerio Passini – Porreta Terme – Italy



We must thank you, Brazilians, because as so many Italians, I would not be here today telling this story. Unfortunately, we would have been invaded and destroyed by Nazism. Thank you, Brazilian soldiers, because without you we wouldn't be here.

“GRAZIE SOLDATO” - THE FEB SEEN BY ITALIANS

Ermanno Sqvarcina – Porreta Terme – Italy



Brazil, a young nation, told the world: we for freedom, for the freedom that embraces all countries of the world, we offer our blood. And maybe this is the ideal spirit that forms the basis of the birth of a united nation, in which the common spirit must point and lead to peace. Thank you, soldier!

Claudio Carelli – Boscaccio – Italy



I have affection for that period, despite the fact that it was a difficult period of bombing, I remember of two soldiers who considered me as a son. They used to come and play with me and I used to play with them. I am very grateful to these people, not only to them, but to the entire Brazilian Army that participated in this action, as they fought for freedom. Thanks for all. Honestly!

Maria Elizabetta Tanari – Gaggio Montano – Italy



The Brazilian soldier knew how to create, here in this region, a deep bond of relationship, friendship and solidarity with the population who suffered due to hunger and the war for many years. They knew how to bring friendship, joy, true sharing and true solidarity. I believe these are the messages we should transfer and take to new generations and make them understand that the man remains a man even in brutal moments, like those moments of war. Thank you, Brazilian soldier!



Brazilian Military Votive Monument - Location: Pistola

FEB'S MEMORY IS TOLD BY MONUMENTS BUILT IN ITALIAN SOIL

A monument is an architectural or sculptural work, built with the purpose of bequeathing the deeds of historical characters or remarkable events to the posterity. Originated from the Latin “monumentum”, the word is derived from the term “monere”, which means to remember. It is, therefore, an ingenious creation to trick the ephemerality of the human journey on the planet, allowing future generations’ contact with history and the preservation of memory.

Keeping the trajectory of the Brazilian Expeditionary Force (FEB) alive during the World War II is precisely what motivates Italians to pass on the past events to their descendants, especially the inhabitants of the regions of Tuscany and Emilia-Romagna, where our soldiers were in action. The touching recognition of that people for the role of Brazil in the greatest



Monument in honor of SGT Max Wolff Filho
in the place he died, in Biscaia, in Italy



Brazilian Military Votive Monument - Location: Pistoia

armed conflict in history is easily seen in the first person reports of people who lived with the veterans, but gratitude also occurs in a concrete way, in the form of monuments.

Altogether, there are 52 structures of different sizes that honor Brazil and the FEB military who fought Nazifascism in Italy in the years 1944 and 1945. No other allied Armed Force that fought in Italy has a similar amount of honor in that Nation. Such ancient and strong cultural ties with Italy are a source of pride and honor for our country.

One of the most well-known landmarks is the Brazilian Military Votive Monument, in Pistoia, created in 1965. The place was the former cemetery for the FEB fighters in Italy. However, when the remains of the veterans who had perished were repatriated to the National Monument to the Dead in World War II, in Rio de Janeiro, in 1960, the place became an authentic open-air museum.

Designed by the architect Olavo Redig de Campos, the place maintains tombstones with the names of the fallen heroes, also recorded in an extensive marble wall, reflected in a water mirror. In front of it, a reinforced concrete structure has, at its base, the “eternal fire”, with a permanently lit flame as a perennial symbol of our veterans.

Another structure of rare beauty is the Liberazione Monument, located in the city of Gaggio Montano. The monument is at the foothills of the famous Monte Castello, stage of one of the bloodiest battles that involved the FEB, and conquered by the Brazilians on February 21, 1945. The work is a project by the artist Mary Vieira and it was inaugurated in 1996.

Symbols of the Brazilian campaign in Italian lands, Marshal Mascarenhas de Moraes, Sergeant Max Wolff Filho and Frei Orlando were also awarded with monuments built by Italians. However, the structure raised in honor of the tenacity of three other combatants calls attention, as they were



Liberazione Monument - Location: Monte Castello

supposed to be anonymous heroes, if it was not for the tribute from their opponents.

On January 24, 1945, a Combat Group from the 1st Infantry Regiment was attacked by the Germans when they traveled near the town of Precaria. Corporal José Graciliano Carneiro da Silva, Private Clóvis da Cunha Paes e Castro and Private Aristides José da Silva guarded the companions' withdrawal, resisting until the end in the face of the attack by mortars and machine guns. The opponents themselves buried them, writing, in German on the simple cross stuck in the place, the words: "3 Bold men from Brazil".

In this way, with oral reports or with the physical memory registered in monuments, the heroism of the veterans is kept alive in the Italian memory. A feeling that has been transmitted to new generations.





FEB COMBATANTS RECEIVE FANCY TRIBUTES IN BRAZILIAN STADIUMS

The country's most popular sport has also been honoring the Brazilian Expeditionary Force (FEB). Between April 2019 and February 2020, the memory of our veterans' achievements won special chapters in soccer stadiums in Brazil. Former FEB fighters were applauded by thousands of fans who went to games in the cities of Curitiba, Porto Alegre and Belo Horizonte at events that touched both the honorees and those who paid them homage.

On May 22, 2019, three former FEB veterans who fought during World War II were cheered by more than 30,000 people present at the Arena da Baixada, in Curitiba. Before the match between Athletico Paranaense, home team, and the Argentinian River Plate, which was the final game of the Recopa Sul Americana, the veterans went to the pitch, where they heard the "Song of the Expeditionary". The event was a partnership between the 5th Military Region and the Expeditionary Paranaense League (LPE) in the context of the Victory Day celebrations, celebrated on May 8.

On September 26, 2019, the stage of the tributes was Arena do Grêmio, in the capital of Rio Grande do Sul. Before the game Grêmio X Avaí, played for the Brazilian Championship, ex-combatants were given a standing ovation





by the public during the exhibition of three military bands: the 3rd Army Police Battalion, the 3rd Guard Cavalry Regiment and the 19th Motorized Infantry Battalion.

The most recent tribute of this magnitude took place on February 16, 2020, at Mineirão Stadium, in Belo Horizonte. It marked the beginning of the celebrations of the 75th anniversary of Victory Day. Six veterans entered the field, next to the 4th Military Region music band, being warmly welcomed by the fans. On the occasion, a minute of silence was also respected in memory of the 467 FEB heroes who fell on Italian soil. The great tribute was an initiative of the 4th Military Region, in partnership with the Federação Mineira de Futebol, Clube Atlético Mineiro and Associação Atlética Caldense, teams that met that night for the state championship.

Tradition in other countries of the world, the act of distinguishing those who fought on behalf of their countries, thus, begins to gain more space in sporting events in Brazil. In this way, the memory of such a beautiful page written with the blood of the heroes who fought in the name of democracy remains alive.

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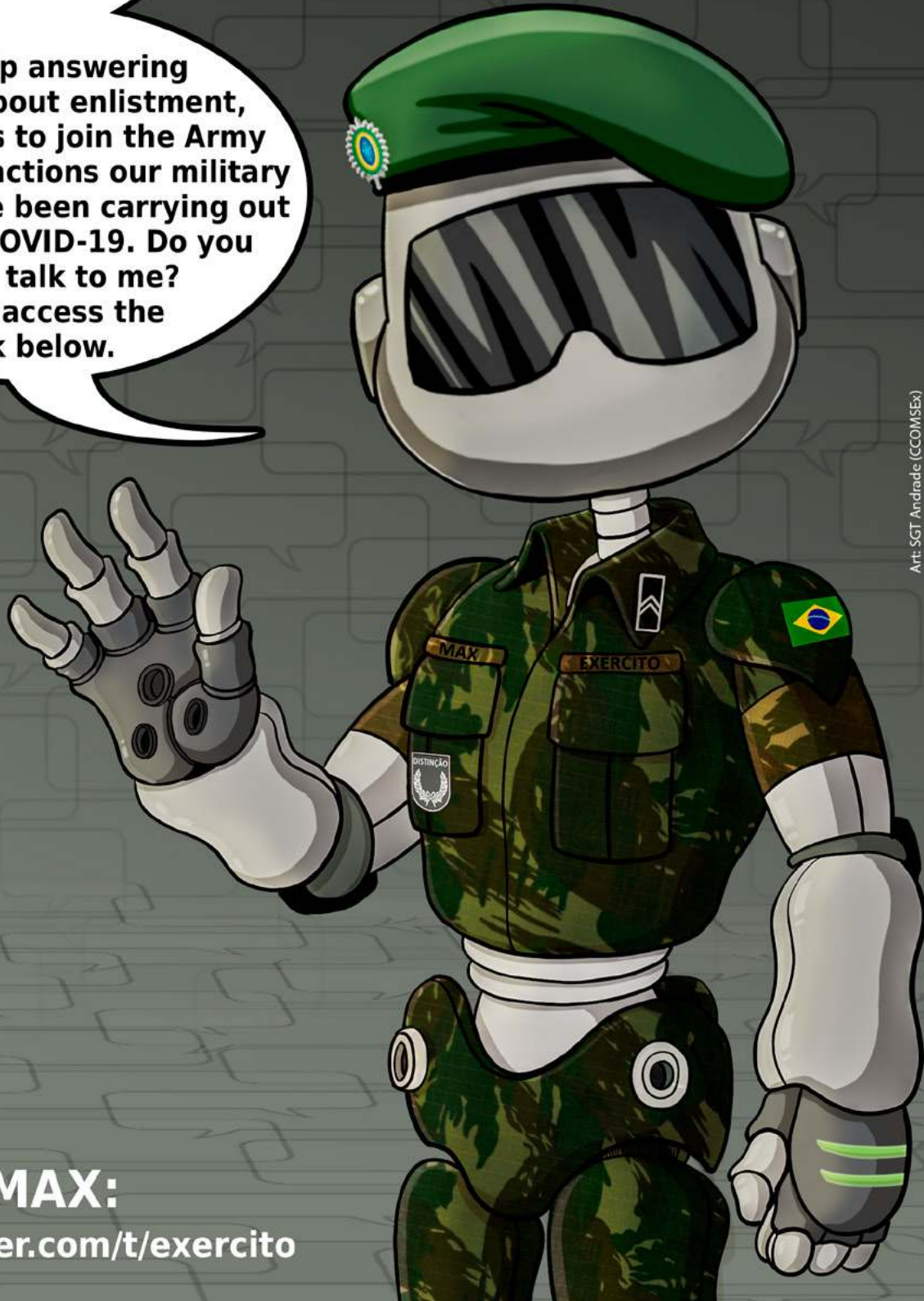
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Art: SGT Andrade (CCOM5Ex)



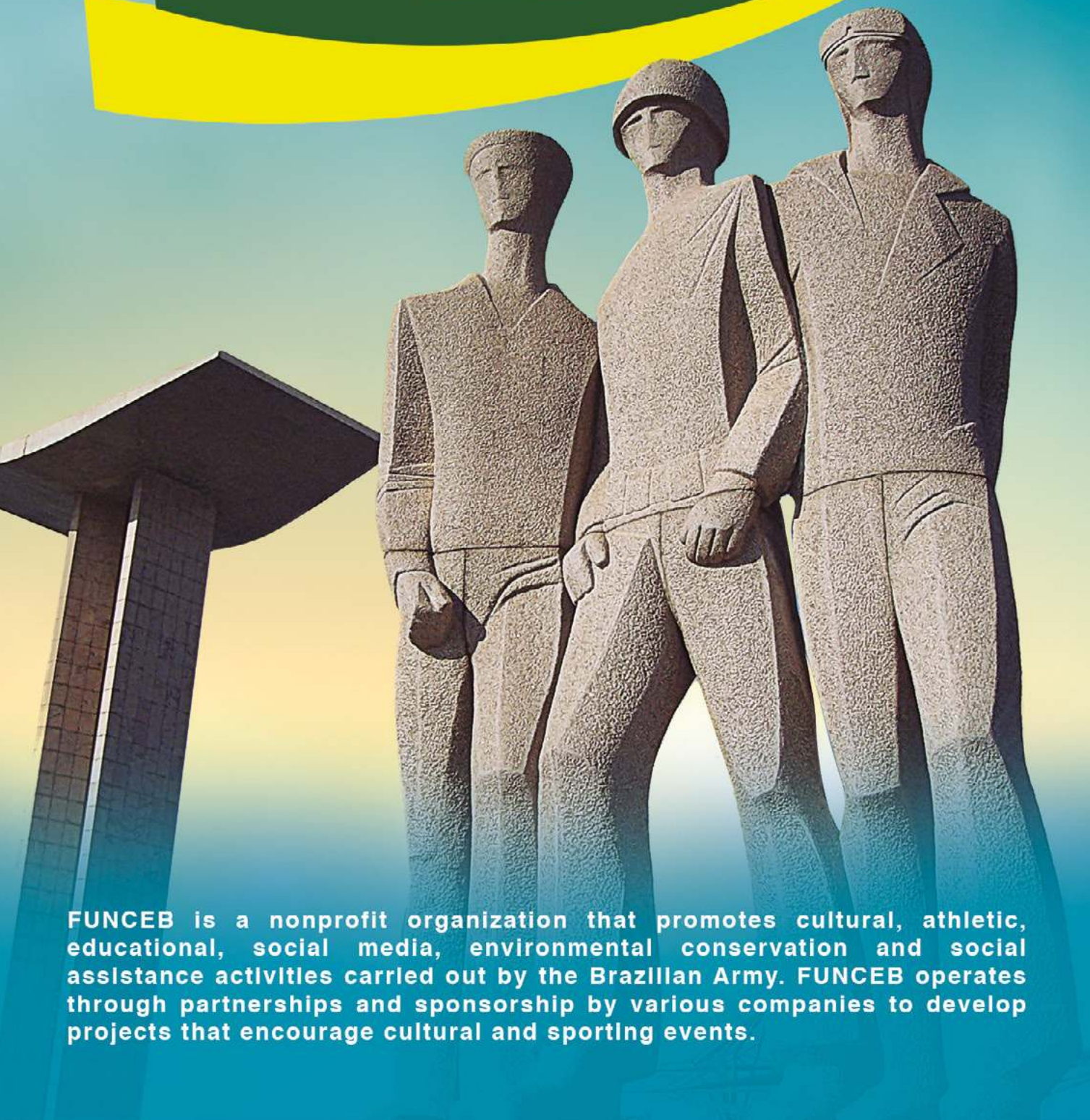
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